

Basher Community Council Meeting Minutes
October 2, 2012
Baxter Elementary School, 7:00 pm

Meeting was called to order by President Dirk Sisson at 7:04 pm

Guests:

Adam Trombley, Anchorage Assembly
Paul Honeman, Anchorage Assembly
Representative Lance Pruitt
Representative Pete Peterson
Representative Anna Fairclough
Senator Bettye Davis

Attendance: 24 community members signed in.

May 3, 2012 Minutes were approved after several typographical edits were noted.

Assembly report

Adam Trombley:

1. Budget: Administration presented the budget to the Assembly today. There is a \$30 million gap to be bridged. Mr. Trombley will be looking at the Community Development Department for cuts—the department currently has 29 planners. He would rather cut planners than police. The fire department may have to look at rolling closures to cut costs; the problem is that incentive pay results in an increase in mandatory pay. There are 3 opportunities for the public to comment on the proposed budget: Oct 11, 25, and at the 1st meeting in November.
2. Sidewalk ordinance: Mr. Trombley voted with the majority of the Assembly in favor of repealing the sidewalk ordinance, but the repeal was vetoed by the Mayor. He doesn't think that there are enough votes to overturn the Mayor's veto.
3. Third party plan review ordinance: Mr. Trombley initiated this change to the municipal code after hearing about the need to streamline the plan review process by allowing a third party licensed engineer to provide plan review on residential housing plans. The ordinance removes the requirement for the municipal plan reviewers to approve housing plans. Third party reviewers have a higher level of qualification than municipal plan reviewers.

Paul Honeman:

1. Budget: The Mayor just released his budget this afternoon, but there has not been enough time to review the options in detail. He presented 2 plans: Plan A and Plan B. Plan A includes deep cuts to city services, Plan B would use tax money to fund the budget shortfall.
2. Emergency preparedness: Mr. Honeman commented on the recent severe windstorms in Anchorage and encouraged everyone to be prepared. The Municipality's Emergency Management Program has useful information on how you can prepare for future emergencies.

Campbell Airstrip Road Upgrade

The Community Council did not submit a letter requesting funding to the Legislature during the last session. We need someone to take this on and follow up with a funding request next session.

Chugach State Park Access Plan

DNR officials and Thede Tobish (Municipal Planner) were invited to tonight's meeting to explain the process, but they declined. Dirk explained that there is a cooperative effort between DNR and the Municipality to develop a plan that can be adopted and integrated with Anchorage 2020. The plan is currently before the Planning & Zoning Commission, and then it will go before the Assembly. DNR made a couple of changes to the proposals for the Stuckagain area, including dropping the pedestrian access along Midden and dropping the pull-out parking at the Tulugak Circle trail easement. The major parking lot proposals at H6 (Basher Trailhead) and H3 (Near Point parcel) remain unchanged. The Executive Committee submitted a letter to the P&Z Commission describing the recommendations for access development that were outlined in the Basher Community Council resolutions on the Chugach State Park Draft Access and Management Plans.

The Access Plan was on the agenda at the P&Z meeting on September 17, 2012. Municipal planner Thede Tobish made a case to the P&Z Commission to adopt the plan with no further changes. He said that the Basher Community was opposed to all expansion of access, despite the letter from the executive committee explaining the BCC proposals for the community which included access expansion at H6 and H2a (Near Point).

Tina Boucher attended the P&Z meeting and reported that several community members gave testimony on the parking proposals at H6 and H3. Ann Gabler spoke in support of improving and expanding the current parking access at H6; however, the neighborhood position is that a medium-sized lot would be adequate; the Park proposes a large lot. Tina Boucher spoke in support of parking development at H2a instead of H3—the adjacent neighborhoods prefer the parking proposal outlined by Director Ben Ellis (DNR Parks and Outdoor Recreation) for a pull-out style parking on the existing road system instead of building a new access road to the proposed H3 parking lot behind the neighborhood. Pull-out style parking for this access point is in line with the Community Council resolutions and also agrees with the original parking that had been platted for the subdivision planned on the parcel. Scott Henderson explained the engineering constraints of the H3 site based on his experience working as a civil engineer on that site and the adjacent parcels; he also cited the neighborhood concerns about the increased traffic and security problems that will come with an access road and parking lot at H3. The Commission decided not to hold vote at the September meeting, noting that if the vote were held without additional information, there were several commissioners who would be voting against adoption. A work session was scheduled for a future meeting.

Assemblyman Adam Trombley urged the community to let him know what our concerns are about this plan.

Question from a community member: Who will pay for road maintenance? This is an issue that has come up repeatedly, but has not been resolved.

Legislative Reports and Candidate Forum

Senate:

Senator Bettye Davis, incumbent District K: Sen. Davis did at one time represent the Basher area while serving in the House, she has most recently spent 12 years in the Senate. She is a member of bipartisan

Senate coalition. She thinks that the coalition works well because members work from middle and not from the extremes.

Representative Anna Fairclough, Candidate for Senate District K: Rep. Fairclough has spent 6 years in the House, and prior to that, 3 terms in the Anchorage Assembly. Her focus will be on fiscal policy planning and repaying the budget reserve.

Adam Trombley asked Rep. Fairclough about education funding. Rep. Fairclough responded that there is a disparity between Anchorage and the smaller cities. The Senate wanted to invest in the Base Student Allocation, but the House supported a one-time allocation of funds.

Question from the community: What is your position on oil and gas taxes? Rep. Fairclough stated that she thought the ACES went too far and needs to be changed. She supports a change to the progressivity curve and supports a change to the tax structure at high oil prices. She voted yes on HB110. The Legislature was not able to resolve the oil tax issue during the special session. One proposal, which is still rumor, includes separating taxes on old oil vs. new oil and coming down on progressivity. The problem with this proposal is that the new producers are not ready to bring oil to market. ACES did what it was supposed to do for exploration. It is important to note that the offshore development does not generate revenue for the state.

Sen. Bettye Davis also responded to the oil and gas tax question: HB110 passed the House and came to the Senate; however, it was not acceptable to the committee. They proposed a new bill that would incentivize new exploration. HB110 did not do what it was supposed to do for constituents. The Governor called the Legislature back with a special session; however, the bill was withdrawn before a vote was held.

Question to Rep. Fairclough from a community member: Would you join the bipartisan coalition? Rep. Fairclough stated that she would not join the current coalition. Her view from the outside is that the coalition chairmanships are blocking conversation between the House and Senate.

Sen. Bettye Davis response on the bipartisan coalition question: The bipartisan coalition has been effective. They have put money into savings before allocating new spending. Her view is that the House was holding up bills. Education is a good example of this. The Senate was in favor of forward funding education, but the House held the bill. The Governor was also against adding to the Base Student Allocation.

House:

Representative Lance Pruitt:

Rep. Pruitt is currently a member of the House majority. He grew up in east Anchorage and comes from the private sector. His goal is to make sure his two kids to have opportunities in Anchorage. He is currently the co-chair of Energy. He extended a bill to lower energy costs, and he believes that we need to use oil wealth to look to the future. He encourages people to visit his website to review his policy positions and committee memberships. He encourages people to always feel free contact him on issues.

Representative Pete Peterson:

This is Rep. Peterson's second term in the House; the Stuckagain neighborhood was added to his district in the recent redistricting. He has lived in Anchorage for 31 years, he has been a business owner (started his own restaurant) and has been a landlord and property manager. He has had several committee memberships—see his website for more information. Education is a big priority for his constituents; he agrees with the new superintendent that we need to improve attendance. He has always worked to get transportation projects within his districts funded each year. He voted against HB 110—he says that it would have given away \$2 billion without any requirement for new development. The State needs to

make sure we get the most for our resources. If we reduce taxes we need a guarantee that that we will get a return on our investment. We need to change progressivity, but we need to make sure money is reinvested in Alaska.

Anchorage Police Department--Neighborhood Watch:

The Neighborhood Watch Program was on tonight's agenda, but no one from APD could attend to make a presentation. It will be on the agenda for the next meeting. Assemblyman Paul Honeman (former APD) commented that the Neighborhood Watch is a free program, and that it works best when many homeowners are involved. He has heard of recent break-ins on Basher, Copper, Midden, and Near Point, and will review these incidents. He encourages everyone to keep an eye out for things that look weird.

LRSA update

Bob Groeneweg reported that the LRSA contractor has been clearing alder along the roadway on Campbell Airstrip and Basher Roads. The summer flooding caused a creek breakout on Montagne Circle; the contractor responded quickly to repair the road damage. For the upcoming snow season, remember to not plow snow from your driveway into the road right-of-way.

Community member question about the pond just before Atelier: Could the pond undermine the road bed? Bob Groeneweg responded that the LRSA contractor worked on it last summer and put in a bypass to drain the pond so that it wouldn't hold so much water.

Election: Treasurer and Member-at-Large:

Dirk asked for nominations for Treasurer and Member-at-Large. No nominations were received, and both of the Executive Committee members stated that they would be willing to continue serving in their current roles. Bruce Talbot was re-elected to the Treasurer position and Mary Norman was re-elected to the Member-at-Large position.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:42 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Tina Boucher
Secretary, BCC